

MINUTES
Town of Crested Butte
Regular Town Council Meeting
Monday, April 5, 2021

Mayor Schmidt called the meeting to order at 7:01PM.

Council Members Present: Will Dujardin, Chris Haver, Mona Merrill, Mallika Magner, Laura Mitchell, and Jason MacMillan

Staff Present: Town Manager Dara MacDonald, Town Attorney John Sullivan, and Town Clerk Lynelle Stanford

Community Development Director Troy Russ, Public Works Director Shea Earley, Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Director Janna Hansen, Town Planner II Mel Yemma, and Finance Director Rob Zillioux (for part of the meeting)

Everyone connected and participated in the meeting via Zoom. Schmidt, MacDonald, Earley, Russ, and Stanford were present in Council Chambers.

Schmidt congratulated Mitchell for being crowned Flauschink Queen.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Haver moved and Magner seconded a motion to approve the agenda. A roll call vote was taken with all voting, "Yes." **Motion passed unanimously.**

CONSENT AGENDA

1) March 15, 2021 Regular Town Council Meeting Minutes.

Staff Contact: Town Clerk Lynelle Stanford

2) March 29, 2021 Special Town Council Meeting Minutes.

Staff Contact: Town Clerk Lynelle Stanford

3) Big Mine Public Art Approval.

Staff Contact: Community Development Director Troy Russ

4) Budget Amendment to Investigate Relocation of Haney House.

Staff Contact: Community Development Director Troy Russ

Mitchell moved and Haver seconded a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. A roll call vote was taken with all voting, "Yes." **Motion passed unanimously.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Susan Petronio - 511 Sopris

- She participated in the community discussion on Elk Avenue.
- She suggested that a mitigation plan be in place before making changes to Elk Avenue.
- The Council should consider the importance of the long-term integrity of the neighborhoods.
- Every consideration should be made before allocating the public space and public funds to for-profit businesses.

STAFF UPDATES

- MacDonald reminded of the affordable housing workshop next Monday, April 12th from 1PM to 5PM. Schmidt and Magner stated they would be on Zoom.
- MacDonald confirmed there would be a quorum on April 19th.
- Schmidt mentioned the joint meeting with the BOCC regarding Mt. Emmons referred to in the Manger's Report. He would agree to the meeting. MacDonald informed the Council that the meeting would take place in June or July.
- Schmidt noted announcements from the Manager's Report such as the closing of Big Mine Ice Arena and Town Clean-up.
- Schmidt thanked Molly Minneman for her service.
- Schmidt questioned comparisons from year to year regarding sales tax. He described the numbers as astounding. Marijuana sales were the only sales that were down.
- Merrill asked about the American Rescue Plan. MacDonald explained Staff would come back to Council. The OVLC discussed using funds for joint projects with partners.
- Dujardin wondered how snow management stacked up against other years. Earley recognized there were a lot of one-inch storms.
- Haver questioned when the boat launch build would start and be completed. Hansen outlined the bid award process. She hoped they could start in June. Hansen confirmed funding would come from the General Capital Fund.

LEGAL MATTERS

Sullivan informed the Council that he was speaking with Marcus Lock, and he was updated on the Scenic Butte situation. There was a two-day hearing. The Judge took the matter under advisement. Sullivan would notify the Council on the ruling.

OLD BUSINESS

1) Discussion on Lifting the Elk Avenue Outdoor Mask Mandate and the Emergency Order.

Staff Contact: Town Manager Dara MacDonald

MacDonald reviewed the history of the agenda item and the memo included in the packet. She reminded the Council of the mandatory requirement for masks to be worn in

the commercial core. MacDonald asked for direction on whether the Council wanted to see the order extended. MacDonald outlined the current situation in Gunnison County related to COVID and the metrics set by the County as to when the public health order would expire. MacDonald anticipated going to green on the Coronameter in May. She identified when masks would be required in the green level. Joni Reynolds hoped to let the County health order fully expire at the end of June.

Schmidt summarized Reynolds' thoughts related to mask wearing. He asked how comfortable the Council felt. Merrill would defer to Reynolds. Magner heard there had been an increase in cases, which MacDonald explained. Magner could not imagine wanting to relax precautionary measures with numbers going up. She was in favor of keeping the mask order. Schmidt recommended the Council reconsider during the first meeting in May. MacDonald recognized that vaccinations were the way out of the pandemic. Merrill agreed revisiting in May made sense. Mitchell and MacMillan agreed. Haver encouraged the Council to continue following Reynolds' recommendations. He was comfortable waiting and seeing. The topic would be discussed the first meeting in May.

NEW BUSINESS

1) Consideration of Design Alternatives to Mitigate Traffic and Congestion Associated with the RV Dump Station at 8th Street and Butte Avenue.

Staff Contact: Community Development Director Troy Russ

Yemma reported on the history on the location of the wastewater treatment plant, the RV dump station, and the build out of the neighborhood. Yemma showed aerial images of Town, used to illustrate build out in Town. Town was built on critical infrastructure. Yemma provided context for future upgrades at the wastewater treatment plant. It was critical that the RV dump station be located near the headworks of the wastewater treatment plant. Yemma recognized this section of Town experienced many impacts, and Town was actively trying to mitigate the impacts.

Yemma provided an explanation to why Town had a RV dump station. Yemma introduced Matt McCombs, the District Ranger for the Forest Service. McCombs reported increases of more than 300% in visitation resulting from recreational activities. The Forest Service was transitioning away from dispersed camping to designated camping to create sustainable spaces for backcountry camping. There would be limitations on the camping that would be available. The Forest Service had to plan for increased use over time. Yemma explained the Council referred the issue to the STOR Committee to examine with a regional lens. Implementing solutions would take time. However, the importance of the RV dump station had been affirmed.

Yemma reviewed the alternatives proposed. She described the formal pay system and signage. Yemma began with Alternative 1, which would have a queue lane on Town right of way on northbound 8th Street between Teocalli and Butte Avenues. She described the alternative and its pros and cons. There was discussion on the wetland.

Schmidt had a problem with the petition, including that there was wrong information on what was being proposed. Haver had questions concerning the sidewalk location and on the size on which the drainage pump was on the RV related to how people would pull in. Magner questioned the number of signatures on the petition. Dujardin asked whether there was support from the public for Alternative 1. Yemma heard feedback on a cry to close the station, and she also heard that queuing off the street was important. Russ told the Council the key feature was the controlled entry. He explained managed versus controlled.

Yemma stated Alternative 2 contemplated reversing the flow of traffic into the station. She identified the anticipated cost, and she reviewed pros to the plan. She pointed out that the plan would not be a controlled environment, and Alternative 2 routed all traffic through the Paradise Park neighborhood.

Next, Yemma spoke regarding Alternative 3. The cost would be about \$110,000 because of moving the Town's street sweeper clean out and a fire hydrant. She pointed out that Alternative 3 would not be a controlled environment, but it would be managed. Russ noted Aperture raised concerns with Alternative 3.

Alternative 4 was to close the station. However, this option could result in instances of illegal dumping in the backcountry. An upside would be that RVs would no longer be traveling in the neighborhood. Schmidt reported on a conversation he had with Gunnison City Manager, Russ Forrest. Yemma stated Alternative 5 would be to make no changes. Yemma identified the Staff recommendation was Alternative 1. The key was that Alternative 1 provided a controlled environment. Furthermore, the pay system with formal time restrictions could mitigate issues.

Roland Mason

- The County was waiting to see what came out of the decision.
- Any discussion once the County was involved would be long-term, looking for a solution.
- The County was willing to be at the table.
- Mason saw it as an issue as to where people could unload their waste.
- Mitchell asked about a location in the Whetstone Business Park (Riverland expansion owned by RTA and Mountain Express). Mason agreed there were options to explore transit potential. Mitchell hoped there would be a RV dump station for the busses.

The discussion became focused on flow and the reason certain locations were precluded from consideration. MacMillan thought putting safety ahead of visitor convenience was important; they needed to be considerate of the people who lived in the neighborhood. He hoped there was a way to find a place south of Town. Merrill asserted that it would get worse, but she did not think they could shut the dump station down without fair warning.

Johnna Bernholtz

- She signed the petition.
- It was never presented to her that the wetlands were going away.
- She appreciated the public meeting and the notices.
- The RV dump station should not be in a neighborhood with families and kids.
- It was not a Town issue; it was a County issue.
- She pointed out advantages to Option #2, including not lining up in front of peoples' homes, and disadvantages to Option #1.
- Bernholtz reiterated something had to be done, responding to Merrill.

Kat Carpenter - Resident of the neighborhood

- She was in favor of Option #1 because it made the most sense in controlling the entrance into the dump station.
- Option #2 would further impact the Paradise Park neighborhood. She was not in favor of Option #2.
- The dump station should remain open until there was a viable solution.

Jillian Liebl - Lives on Block 76

- Option #2 would be challenging for RVs.
- It was like a parade all summer.
- She encouraged Council to please close the dump station.
- She would opt for #1.

Kent Cowherd - 901 Teocalli Avenue

- He supported Option #2.
- Option #1 was in the safe corridor to school.
- Option #2 had an exit that funneled back out of the Town and a queue lane that was not in front of any houses.
- He believed there should be a sewer clean-up in Town, referring to the Town's values.

Benjamin Diem - Reported to live next door to Cowherd

- Paonia closed their dump station. He had to drive 28 miles outside of town to dump his trailer. He was happy to pay \$40.

Tara Wirsing - 15 9th Street

- She agreed with everyone who had been talking about safety.
- She was in favor of closing the dump station in Town and finding a new spot.
- Give the warning to people, and work towards moving the dump station out of Town.

Johnna Bernholtz

- 8th Street had become really busy with regular traffic.

Schmidt identified the first decision point was whether to keep the dump station open in Town this coming year. The second decision was on which alternative. MacDonald said

the Staff's least favorite alternative was to do nothing. Staff would recommend closing the dump station outright, rather than doing nothing. Russ pointed out Option #1 could be transitioned to something beneficial in the future. Mitchell thought the RV dump station should be closed. It was crazy to spend \$50,000. Magner agreed with Mitchell that the RV dump station should be closed. The neighborhood was one of the last local neighborhoods. Dujardin did not think the Council should close the dump station until a solution was set in stone. He recommended choosing Option #1 or #2. He was leaning towards Option #2. Haver wanted to see a future dump station that was located out of Town. He had a hard time choosing between #1 and #2, as well as spending the money for the next two years. Schmidt preferred to continue with the dump station remaining open.

Mimi Chatwood

- She understood the ecologic impact more than most.
- She saw the situation on both Butte and Teocalli.
- A neighbor lost an animal due to being hit and killed by a RV.
- It was a safety factor.
- RV owners could get to Gunnison to save someone's life.

Merrill was not sure where she stood. She wanted the dump station to go away, and it was a matter of tomorrow or in two years. Mitchell thought the dump station was a great amenity, but it was not in the right place at the right time.

Magner moved and MacMillan seconded a motion that we decide to not open the RV dump station. A roll call vote was taken with Merrill, Mitchell, Magner, Haver, and MacMillan voting, "Yes," and Schmidt and Dujardin voting, "No." **Motion passed.**

Schmidt thanked the Staff for the work and efforts related to the RV dump station.

2) Elk Avenue Patios Bid Award, Summer Traffic Calming, and Associated Budget Amendment.

Staff Contact: *Community Development Director Troy Russ*

Russ told the Council that three bids were received for the patios. The high bid was from Western Precision Manufacturing in Grand Junction. Both Modstreet and Ben Diem/Tucker Roberts were compliant. Staff recommended moving forward with Ben Diem/Tucker Roberts. The Town received a \$150,000 grant from CDOT that would be applied to the cost of the patios.

Yemma reported regarding traffic calming. Traffic calming on Whiterock was recommended, regardless of the decision made concerning Elk Avenue. Yemma outlined Alternative #1, traffic control devices, and Alternative #2, traffic calming measures. Russ spoke about the chicane (yield condition) and the design. Schmidt asked for clarification on pop-up speed signs.

Magner recalled the suggestion of a 10MPH speed limit on Sopris and Maroon, to which Russ responded. Russ explained the geometry of the street made the difference. Magner clarified the 10MPH speed limit would be in addition to the traffic calming plan. Haver thought the flower boxes in the middle of the street made more sense. Russ said the forced turn away from a flower box was a traffic calming method. Russ wanted the flower boxes to be more conspicuous. Yemma reported that Staff proposed two flower boxes per block. Schmidt hated to lose parking, and he agreed with Haver on center flower boxes. The discussion focused on parking spaces related to the location of the flower boxes. Russ stated that no matter what was decided for Elk Avenue, Staff would still recommend traffic control or calming on Whiterock because of traffic related to the Little Blue Canyon project.

Yemma reported on parking management outreach. She announced there would be a community meeting this week on Zoom. Staff would develop a draft parking management program that would be presented to the community and presented during the Town Council work session on May 3rd.

Yemma broke down the decision points: 1) consider reconfiguring Elk Avenue with patios; 2) keep the status quo on Elk Avenue; or 3) reconfigure Elk Avenue with parklets and flower boxes.

The feedback that Mitchell received was that the traffic impacts were too much on surrounding neighborhoods. She had questions on why the Town was spending money to support a certain type of business. Merrill heard most people were in favor of the one-way, and she heard feedback on including more outreach. Merrill was in favor of the one-way with parklets, but she was not in favor of the investment in the patios. The Community Compass was the highest priority. Merrill thought it wise to see what it would be like without a pandemic. MacMillan asked about the CDOT grant, and he confirmed the funds were just for patios. He was in favor of the patios over the parklets because of safety, and he was in favor of the traffic calming measures. Haver was challenged with jumping in on something that was a big investment that was a want rather than a need. He could see investing in the parklets for the summer. One of his big problems was that the plan was not biker friendly. Haver was more in favor of parklets, including getting more input from the community on what they wanted on Elk. They could always move the flower boxes around Town based on the locations with the worst traffic issues. Magner acknowledged the grant program, Revitalizing Main Streets, was a state-wide program that recognized how uses of the streets helped pedestrian access and made life in downtowns much better. Revitalizing Main Streets was not a Crested Butte initiative. Magner thought it was vital to address impacts on side streets. She wanted to add the 10MPH speed limit on Sopris and Maroon. Magner was in favor of continuing with the one-way. Dujardin stated everything would just continue building up. He liked where they were last year, considering the cost. He supported the one-way. He thought they needed the chicanes on the side streets. Schmidt thought the one-way worked great. He liked dining outside. He favored the patios, and safety was the #1 reason. ADA access was important. Town was sitting in a good financial position, and it would vitalize the downtown. Schmidt did not have a problem if the Council decided to go with

the parklets. Haver agreed with Dujardin that the parking and speed mitigation were important to be worked on. He liked the off-sidewalk seating, rather than the sidewalk seating. Haver wondered whether shrinking the parklets would allow for two-way bicycle travel. MacMillan pointed out Mountain Express was against two-way bicycle traffic. Magner agreed with Dujardin and Haver that the Council would have to deal with parking and traffic issues throughout Town. The impacts were coming, one-way or not. The Council absolutely had to look at traffic and parking around Town, regardless. She would love to have a bike lane with counter flow.

Kent Cowherd

- He believed two-way traffic on Elk Avenue was the answer this summer.
- He suggested smaller parklets.
- Part of the traffic from Kebler would head to Elk Avenue.
- He liked traffic control measures on Sopris and Maroon.
- It was a good idea to enforce two-hour parking on Elk Avenue this summer.
- He thought the Town should warm up to one-way traffic on Elk Avenue.

Schmidt identified the first decision was whether the Council wanted to reintroduce one-way traffic on Elk Avenue.

Magner moved and MacMillan seconded a motion that we have Elk Avenue be a one-way going westbound again this summer.

Discussion continued regarding the reasoning behind the one-way. Dujardin wondered whether there could be two-way traffic with eight-foot patios. Haver said there were a lot of options to consider with parklets. In perpetuity, Merrill was interested in shrinking the parklets to get another bike lane. Russ stated there could not be eight-foot patios, two-way traffic, and a dedicated bike lane. Russ informed the Council that the curbing was the hold up. The discussion turned to COVID restrictions and what was anticipated for the summer. Russ explained the pedestrian experience and safety were the primary drivers, rather than COVID limitations. Magner wanted to reiterate that Staff and many Council members spent hours discussing the ramifications.

A roll call vote was taken with Magner, Schmidt, Haver, MacMillan, and Dujardin voting, "Yes," and Merrill and Mitchell voting, "No." **Motion passed.**

Next, the Council discussed patios and parklets. Schmidt preferred the patios. Magner questioned whether there was savings to the Town for the patios. MacDonald stated Staff would not need to maintain the flower boxes on Elk Avenue. Russ noted that Staff would need to build flower boxes. Hansen thought it would be about even between parklets and patios, regarding cubic feet of containers that would need to be planted. MacMillan reiterated safety and ADA accessibility were important. The grant made patios more palatable. Mitchell preferred patio style compared to parklets. Magner was with MacMillan and Mitchell. She heard people mention the aesthetic appeal of the patios. Merrill was in favor of the one-way with parklets. Dujardin's problem with the patios was the cost. He identified the issue of affordable housing for the workers. He would

want to go back to the plan from last year and have money for housing. Merrill echoed Dujardin's sentiments. She wanted the discussion to be a part of the Community Compass. Merrill did not want to hold their feet to the fire for the next ten years. Haver agreed with Dujardin. Haver liked the parklets better than sidewalk seating. The Council was putting effort and energy into it when they should be putting effort and energy into housing. Haver pointed out the patios were a want and not a need, and housing was a bigger concern. Dujardin voted at the previous meeting to see the bids, but he did not like the bids. He did not think they should spend the money on the patios until they had the public discussion. Haver thought a one-way with parklets was safer than two-way traffic.

Magner moved and Mitchell seconded a motion to direct Staff to enter into negotiations with Diem/Tucker to construct patios. A roll call vote was taken with Magner, Schmidt, and MacMillan voting, "Yes," and Merrill, Mitchell, Haver, and Dujardin voting, "No." **Motion failed.**

Magner moved and Haver seconded a motion to go with the parklets. A roll call vote was taken with Merrill, Mitchell, Magner, Schmidt, Haver, and Dujardin voting, "Yes," and MacMillan voting, "No." **Motion passed.**

Magner moved and MacMillan seconded a motion for Alternative #2 but directing Staff to come forward with an ordinance for a 10MPH speed limit on Sopris and Maroon. A roll call vote was taken with all voting, "Yes." **Motion passed unanimously.**

Russ did not think the signs would survive a chicane set up, responding to Dujardin. Mitchell asked why they could not use temporary speed bumps. Russ did not recommend temporary speed bumps on the bus route. Flower boxes gave value to a neighborhood, compared to speed bumps. MacMillan thought the 10MPH speed limit warranted a larger discussion. MacDonald pointed out that an ordinance would be needed to amend the Code to change the speed limit.

3) Appointment to the Valley Housing Fund.

Staff Contact: Town Clerk Lynelle Stanford

Schmidt pointed out that Melissa LaMonica was the only person who applied. LaMonica was present on Zoom. LaMonica stated she bought a business in Crested Butte in September. She lived in a rental in Gunnison but was looking to move to Crested Butte. Schmidt's concern was that LaMonica would need to keep the Council up to date by emails and presentations. She felt she could represent and keep the Council up to date. Dujardin asked how she would go about solving the housing crises. LaMonica reported she would get business owners together. The business owners thought outside of the box, and it was a problem for them, as well. She was willing to learn to come up with a solution. Haver encouraged LaMonica to get to know Jennifer Kermode with the Gunnison Valley Regional Housing Authority. The Council asked LaMonica to report back to the Council quarterly or as needed. Merrill suggested email updates after the Housing Fund meetings.

Magner moved and Haver seconded a motion to appoint Melissa LaMonica as representative to the Valley Housing Fund Board. A roll call vote was taken with Merrill, Mitchell, Magner, Schmidt, Haver, and MacMillan voting, "Yes," and Dujardin voting, "No." **Motion passed.**

COUNCIL REPORTS AND COMMITTEE UPDATES

Chris Haver

- He had a RTA meeting.
 - Renovations had started at the airport. This year, by ski season, they hoped to have the upstairs redone.
 - Part of the cost of flights to Houston would involve carbon offsets.
 - Ridership on busses was still down 40%.
 - Fewer people had been left behind.
 - All drivers had been vaccinated.
 - The late-night town taxi was back.
 - United was keeping two flights a day year around from Denver.

Laura Mitchell

- The grants for the Whetstone project were complicated. The money was there, but it would be in cycles.
- Mountain Express bought a senior service van.
- RTA was looking at housing solutions in Gunnison.
 - The biggest news was the two flights of day to Denver.
- Mountain Express would keep an eye on Mt. Crested Butte. They were thinking about North Village and what it would look like.
 - Mountain Express received a CARES Act reward of \$1M.
 - They were working on a transportation plan.
 - They had problems with masks and leave behinds.

Will Dujardin

- The ski area closing caused his responsibilities to wane. He thanked the Council.
- He emailed notes from the EOC meetings. They would see how well Gunnison County would do at getting to the mark of 75% people taking the vaccine. He would not be surprised if there were bumps that would keep Gunnison County away from benchmarks.
- He was in on the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District meeting.
 - March offered a reprieve, but the vast majority of Gunnison County was in severe drought with a little part in extreme drought.
 - They were looking at how to manage the water supply throughout the summer.
- He appreciated the support from Town for Crested Butte State of Mind. The lighting up was cool and gave a good vibe.

Jim Schmidt

- MacDonald and he were on a Zoom meeting on the school planning.

- The question was a \$100M bond issue.
- The majority of people on the panel said the big need was in Crested Butte.
- The school would be designed to handle 1000 kids.
- The ski area presented at the Mayor/Managers meeting.
 - Tim Baker reported to be pleased with ski season.
 - There were no outbreaks amongst employees.
 - The major work this summer would be replacing the Peach Tree lift. Also, there would be footrests on the Teocalli lift.

OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE COUNCIL

Schmidt asked Mitchell about the timing of her anticipated resignation related to the sale of her home. Mitchell would let the Council know when she closed on her home, which she expected to happen around June.

MacDonald asked the Council to think about the future of Zoom meetings. It was a lot to manage the meetings. The Council needed to have a discussion on the utility of Zoom meetings. Schmidt recognized that it seemed more people were involved on Zoom.

DISCUSSION OF SCHEDULING FUTURE WORK SESSION TOPICS AND COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

- Monday, April 19, 2021 - 6:00PM Work Session - 7:00PM Regular Council
- Monday, May 3, 2021 - 6:00PM Work Session - 7:00PM Regular Council
- Monday, May 17, 2021 - 6:00PM Work Session - 7:00PM Regular Council

Schmidt mentioned the retreat scheduled for Monday, April 12th from 1PM to 5PM. He confirmed that he would be on Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Schmidt adjourned the meeting at 11:00PM.


James A. Schmidt, Mayor


Lynelle Stanford, Town Clerk

(SEAL)

